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To: Instructional Quality Commission
c/o Thomas Adams, Executive Director
1430 N Street, Suite 3207
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Re: November 20th Testimony

Following is the testimony given by myself at the November 20th IQC Meeting:

My name is Acharya Arumuganathaswami, I am a renunciate monk under lifetime vows at Kauai's Hindu Monastery, which is in the Saivite tradition of South India and Sri Lanka. Acharya, meaning teacher, is a title which was given to me in an ordination following 24 years of training. It is more or less equivalent to a bishop in the Catholic or Methodist church.

I'm also managing editor of *Hinduism Today* magazine and with Dr. Shiva Bajpai, professor emeritus of history, Cal State Northridge, produced *The History of Hindu India*, specifically written for middle and high school.

I am commenting on this document, "South Asia Studies Faculty Review" on the narrative revision and submitted to the commission at the last minute after five years of silence from this group. Dr. Bajpai and I worked quickly to provide a response to this paper, which is as much a political statement as a scholarly analysis. We urge you to carefully study the response to the Faculty Review not only from Uberoi, but also from Prof. Chakrabarthi of Cambridge University, Prof. Adlujkar of the University of British Columbia, Dr. BB Lal, former director of the Archaeological Survey of India and Michel Danino, professor IIT India.

The Faculty Review repeatedly refers to "scholarly consensus," as if historical fact was determined by vote. Highly qualified historians, linguists and archaeologists, such as Chakrabarti, Adlujkar and Lal, disagree with their so-called "scholarly consensus" on very solid grounds. The history of science is replete with instances where scholarly consensus was overturned by new research, which is what is happening now for the history of India.

In preparing for the meeting, I was told by tenured professors that while they supported our position completely, we could not use their name because of the attacks that would follow from others in South Asian studies. Younger scholars told me their careers could be ruined if they participated. I found this an astonishing situation, but one that would certainly contribute to an appearance of "scholarly consensus."

Area studies itself is a political/academic legacy of the cold war. South Asia studies is notable for its hostile attitude toward India and Hinduism, one quite evident in this review. They even include deleting "India"—a name used for thousands of years in one form or another from Europe to China—in favor of "South Asia", a modern geopolitical term, and effectively erasing one of the world's great classical civilizations. It would be like renaming Greek studies, "South Balkan Peninsula Studies."

Now, to the actual document. For all the intimidating bluff, bluster and name calling of the first few pages, the suggested edits we found on Hinduism numbered just 37. Several are focused on names, including the name of India itself. We actually agree with several of the them, such as replacing Ganges with Ganga, the proper name of the river in India. We disagree with the rest to one degree or another. Some are attempts to remove Hinduism from history, such as by deleting that Buddha grew up within the Hindu religion, a historical fact critical to an understanding of the religion which eventually developed in his name. We noted with amusement that in the latter parts of the document the authors themselves lapsed into using "India" instead of "South Asia" such as their reference to Chandragupta Maurya uniting "India" not "South Asia," in 321 bce.

Finally, we found one commendable edit, that on Sikhism for page 306 of the narrative. We assume it to have been written by Gaurinder Singh Mann, a Sikh and professor emeritus at UC Berkeley. It is reasonably short and gives a much broader overview of the founding of Sikhism while avoiding the adverse reflection on Hinduism still present in the current edit.

Thank you very much for listening patiently to our persistent input at this critical time in the narrative revision process.



Acharya Arumuganathaswami
Managing Editor
Hinduism Today Magazine